

**poster ABSTRACT**

Poster No. 9

**TITLE****EPHT AND DISASTER RESPONSE — MONITORING ENVIRONMENTAL LEAD FOLLOWING HURRICANE KATRINA****TRACK****Network Content****OBJECTIVES**

Data contained within the Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (EPHTN) is a valuable resource for monitoring changes in environmental and health conditions following the occurrence of a natural disaster. Issues to consider when planning environmental and health event monitoring for this purpose include the potential availability of post-event data; data format both pre- and post-event; geographic coverage and resolution of data necessary to conduct relevant monitoring; and access issues related to inter-agency collaboration. Issues associated with monitoring changes in environmental lead in New Orleans following the flooding caused by Hurricane Katrina are presented.

**SUMMARY**

Lead is a major public health concern in New Orleans, an old city with a large low-income minority population, an old housing stock, and a legacy of lead deposited in soils as a result of automobile exhaust. In the wake of the flooding caused by Hurricane Katrina in September, 2005, the characterization of environmental conditions was important to city leaders, public health and environmental quality officials, and to displaced and returning residents. With respect to environmental lead, there was some concern that floodwaters might have displaced lead in soils and deposited it in higher concentrations in lower lying areas. To determine whether this was the case, it was necessary to have both pre- and post-flooding soil lead levels. Effective monitoring of the impact of the flooding on soil lead levels required that pre- and post-event data be compatible and comparable. Issues encountered during this effort were associated with data format, geographic coverage and resolution, and access/interagency collaboration. Successful comparisons, displayed in GIS maps, revealed that the pattern of soil lead levels post-Katrina was consistent with that from before the storm. The issues encountered here should be considered in the context of developing an EPHT network capable of providing a resource for emergency response

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